

## **Silent Mate 81**

### Chapter 81 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

#### Winter POV

I say goodnight to my brother and Johnathon, still not quite believing they are here or that they travelled so much to warn me about Thomas. I know I've made them angry and annoyed at my suggestion of being bait, but this is my life and I refuse to live it afraid of one man who is after me. I've managed to survive Candice and everything she's done to me, so I refuse to let this one person, Thomas best me now. Not when I feel stronger and more assured of myself than ever. Kai seems to sense my determination, because to my absolute shock, he agrees with my suggestion. Maybe he too, knows that I'm desperate for this all to end. I just want to live my life without having to constantly check over my shoulder.

We walk upstairs to the bedroom and I feel well inspired, feisty and brave all at the same time. I'm on edge and I don't know why. Sabriel is purring in my mind.

I think it's because you want him again. After all the day after our first night together was kind of ruined.

I want to take the initiative this time. Is that surprising Sabriel?

Not really. You're becoming more confident and self assured. It's not surprising that it's starting to flow into other aspects of your life as well. You're growing as a person but more importantly as a woman. If you want him, then show him.

How do I do that Sabriel, I don't want to make a fool of myself.

Something tells me you'll work it out and trust me babe, you won't make a fool of yourself. That man wants you and he wants you bad. He's probably just waiting for you to make the next move, especially with what you went through.

Guess I'm doing it then.

That's what I'm talking about girl. Go get some! Sabriel cheers.

Kai is staring at me, probably wondering what I was talking to my wolf about. I'm not about to enlighten him. I like my conversations with Sabriel way too much to divulge anything we do or speak about together. Instead I stare him direct in the eyes and stride over, gently placing my lips against his as he starts in shock.

God his lips are rough, but he tastes so sweet and I lightly trace them with my tongue until he opens his mouth up, delving inside and lightly dancing with his own tongue. His hands grip me tightly around the waist, and he pushes his lips harder against me as I moan. I feel his hands moving under my shirt and reluctantly stop him as he stares in confusion. I smirk.

"I'm in charge" I rasp and his eyes widen in disbelief, but he stands there, waiting as I lick my lips and look him all over hungrily. My hands go to his chest and I slowly, carefully, teasingly, begin to undo the buttons on his shirt, letting it drop to the floor. My hands move over his chest, feeling, my head lowering down to kiss him along his navel as he trembles beneath me. I take my time. I want to feel him all over. Want to make him feel as adored as he makes me feel.

I drop to my knees and his eyes glisten down at me as I slowly, reverently, begin to pull his pants down. He's not wearing any underwear (not a complete shocker considering it's one less piece of clothing to deal with when dressing in a hurry) and his cock is already rock hard and standing erect. I almost drool. I want to taste him, my mouth watering already. He looks like he's about to pull me up and I shake my head at him.

"I want to taste you" I say and watch his eyes darken, his body tensing as I slowly bend down and lick the shaft of his penis as he shudders. I grip his legs and begin to open my mouth, slowly taking him inside, inch by inch as he tenses and his breathing becomes heavy. He feels smooth and his scent is so delicious. I've never done this before, but it's like I know what to do instinctively. I begin to move my head back and forth, hearing him moan out loud as I take as much of him in my mouth as I can. I like listening to him. His hands are gripping the back of my head and twining around my hair and I increase the pressure and the timing of my thrusts as he begins to pant heavily from above me.

"Baby girl!" he pants, his hands grabbing hold of me and pulling me up, even as I want to protest "you keep going and I'm going to cum" he growls and I pout. I wouldn't have minded. But he seems determined that I have my fun too, almost dragging me to the bed and dropping me on it. He uses his

claws to shred my clothes off, apparently too impatient to take them off nicely and I can see his wolf is dangerously close to the surface.

He pulls my legs up, exposing my pussy to his gaze, licking his own lips. Before I can say anything, he begins to trace along my clit with his tongue and my body tenses up. God damn, it feels fucking amazing and the pleasure is intense, even though he takes his sweet ass time. I'm panting, my hands clenching in the bedcovers as he makes a growl of satisfaction, enjoying my small cries and moans. "Kai" I moan, my whole body shivering and quivering "god, I can't take much more" I gasp and he chuckles, lowering his head and flicking his tongue quickly against my clit. I unravel completely and scream out his name, cumming hard against him, as he laps up my juices, prolonging the orgasm even more. I come back down to earth with a crash.

He looks like he's about to come back up, but I grab hold of his arm and shake my head. "I want to be on top" I tell him, biting my lip. His eyes light up and I stand, waiting for him to lie down. Now I'm incredibly nervous. It's not like I've done this position before after all. But he smiles at me reassuringly.

"Take your time" he rasps out.

I get up and kneel over him, slowly guiding his cock inside of me as he groans out loud.

"Fuck you're tight" he moans and I begin to kneel down, riding him as he looks over at me in appreciation.

His hands skim along my waist and his eyes are dark. He doesn't move and I realise it's because he's going to let me set the pace. Slowly, I begin to move up and down, watching as his hands touch me all over without halting my progress. He cups my breast in one hand and I moan as he squeezes it. I feel full, incredibly stuffed in this position and his cock is sliding against my clit with every movement back and forth. It's fucking intense and I moan, whimper and mewl as I move.

"Fuck" he moans and I smile, leaning down to kiss him, whirling my tongue inside of his mouth. I begin to move faster, loving the fact that I'm in charge and that I set the pace. His hands grip me around the waist, helping to guide me back and forth. But I can see he's getting impatient and I know it's just a matter of time until he takes over, unable to take the teasing any more.

Sure enough he grips me on the waist with both hands and slowly lifts me as I protest. "No more teasing" he growls and places me on the bed, positioning me on my hands and knees. I look over my shoulder and see him approach. He positions himself at his entrance and pushes all the way inside with one hard thrust that takes my breath away. If I thought he felt big in the other position, then it was nothing compared to this position.

I arch my back and whimper as he thrusts in and out of me. He's not gentle, instead he's taking me rough, wild, almost primal in a way. I move back and forth to meet him. I can hear the sounds of us as we move back and forth together, his hands in my hair, pulling my head back gently, my eyes looking up at him. In this position he's the dominant one, but I don't mind. In fact I'm revelling in it, happy to be submissive now that I've already had my fun with him.

His hand reaches down between my legs and I tense up as he begins to finger my clit while he continues to pound inside of me. Fuck. It's like my body can't handle the pleasure between everything that's happening and I mewl, almost sobbing with the intensity of the pleasure. My whole body is tense. I can feel an orgasm approaching, and apparently so can Kai.

"Cum for me" he rasps, biting my shoulder "cum for me darling" he croons.

I let out a shriek and then the orgasm washes over me, Kai wasting no time in pounding into me even harder and faster as I whimper. It feels incredible. Then I feel him stiffen, his body tensing behind me and then with a shout, he spills his seed inside of me and then collapses on the bed next to me.

I lie down and he rolls me over to snuggle, my back pressed against his chest. He's breathing heavily, one hand over my stomach in a possessive move, that I've quite gotten used to from him.

"That was amazing" Kai tells me, kissing me on the forehead "I'm especially impressed at your wanting to be in charge. Sorry if I ruined it" he apologises sheepishly. "Storm couldn't take not being in charge."

I laugh. Trust his wolf to want to be the one on top. Besides I hadn't minded. I can still taste his cock in my mouth and lick my lips.

"You didn't ruin it" I assure Kai. He smiles. looking very relieved.

There's a slight stinging pain between my legs and I feel a little uncomfortable. Kai, gentleman that he is, senses it.

"Wait here" he says kissing me on the nose. I watch him disappear into the bathroom and then hear the sound of running water. God, I hope it's for the bath tub. I need to soak in water and get rid of this stinging pain. He comes back with a wash cloth.

He spreads my legs and then gingerly begins to wipe me down, cleaning me up as I wince from the stinging.

"Bath" he says firmly and I nod, standing up and walking towards the bathroom, Kai whistling behind me. Well he's in a good mood, but then who wouldn't be after sex?

Ahhh the blessed relief of the water is divine as I sink into it. I lean back against the bathtub, Kai having a shower at the same time as I eye him like candy. I'm already feeling aroused and I look away embarrassed even as my mate smirks at me.

"I'd take you again, but I think you might be in too much pain" he says with a grin.

I blush despite myself.

"Just so you know" he teases "you can take me anytime you want princess."

I throw a shower puff at him as he laughs. Then I settle back against the bathtub. I'm too relaxed to be mad at his teasing.

I feel myself yawning. After that sex marathon, I feel completely drained. Kai sees me almost falling asleep and wraps a towel around himself. "Winter" he says softly as I stare up at him, my eyes blurry. He gives a chuckle and drains the water, picking me up and wrapping me in a towel, heading back into the bedroom and making a beeline for the bed.

"I'm cold" I protest when he places me in the bed naked.

"I'll warm you" he growls, climbing in beside me. He pulls me against his chest and throws the bed covers over us. My eyes close as his body heat begins to warm me up. Before long I'm sound asleep, the last thing I remember is Kai kissing me on the forehead.

## Chapter 82 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Langdon POV

I take Damien out to what I like to refer to as my bachelor pad. Not that it's going to continue to be one, not if I now have a mate. He looks so timid. Does he honestly think I'm going to jump his bones, right here and now? Especially since we're both adjusting to the fact that our mate is another male? I mean, I never in a million years thought that would be the case. I'm not against gay people, I just envisioned a female as my mate. Doesn't mean I feel too disappointed either. After all mates are meant to be a blessing from the moon goddess herself. I doubt she makes mistakes. Or at least I like to think she doesn't. She is a goddess after all.

I'm holding Damien's hand and his cheeks are flushed as he gazes around the small house I own. He looks impressed, but I'm far more interested in him.

"Is Winter going to be okay?" he asks suddenly "I mean in that house with that man. He looks awfully fierce" he says apprehensively, narrowing his eyes. I almost scoff at him. Kai is a big teddy bear once you get to know him. But he does have a reputation to uphold.

Surely he's not serious? Sure, Kai was an asshole in the beginning, but he wouldn't hurt Winter, at least not now. The man was completely besotted with her and she was with him. I've never seen such a perfect couple. They are completely infatuated with each other, and I happen to know that Kai's told her he loves her. The furthest he's ever gone in a relationship.

"Kai loves Winter" I say turning to Damien indignantly. "She loves him as well, you should know."

His eyes widen. "I didn't think it was that serious" he says lowly.

Is he completely oblivious? I'm starting to wonder about his intelligence. "Winter and Kai have gone through a lot together. Trust me when I tell you she's completely safe with him."

He doesn't look convinced and I sigh, leading him into my bedroom where he stops short, looking absolutely terrified. "I um, thought you were joking about sleeping in the same room" he blurts out, letting go of my hand.

I stiffen. I wasn't joking. His face goes ashen. Is he really that terrified to share the same room as me? I consider him, taking in the way he's breathing unevenly, the flush on his cheeks. He's either really scared or really embarrassed. Or both.

"I told you we were only going to share the bed, nothing else" I say a little annoyed. "Surely you're not that much of a fraidy cat."

His eyes widen. "I'm not afraid" he tells me and I just cock my head at him, a small smile on my face. Oh, he's scared alright, he just doesn't want to admit it. He's adorable, my wolf tells me, and I have to agree. I know he's slightly older than Winter which means there's less of an age gap between us than there is between Kai and her.

"Then what's the problem" I huff out.

He blushes and looks away. "It's just that, how do I know you won't try anything" he mumbles.

"How about because I've given you my word" I growl and he gasps as I walk up to him, my eyes staring into his, my face only inches away from his own. He looks like a deer caught in headlights. "All I want to do is sleep in the same bed as you" I say firmly "that's all."

He bites his lip but nods. Thank god for that. He's making me grumpy and not because I'm tired. Suddenly I can't seem to look away from him, my eyes gazing deeply into his, those lips of his tempting me. I try my best to hold out, but suddenly it becomes too much to bear, being this close to him and smelling his delicious scent.

I close the gap between us, holding his head in my hands and leaning forward to press my lips against his. He flinches and then moans as I lick his lips, demanding access. He opens his mouth and I begin to plunder it. God he tastes so fucking good, feels so incredible as I continue to deepen the kiss, my hands moving down to the back of his neck as I hold on tightly. My hands begin to caress his arms and he makes no move to stop me, his own eyes closing in what I hope is bliss. My whole body is thrumming

with desire and the need to ravish him, but I'm careful to step slightly back, not wanting Damien to feel the erection poking through my pants. The last thing I need to do is scare the poor kid with that. He'll definitely run away if he knows.

I feel my wolf coming dangerously close to the surface and will him to stay back, focussing on the kiss and the feel of my mate in my arms. His moans are turning me on and I'm barely holding it together. Slowly, reluctantly, I pull back, watching as Damien's eyes slowly flutter open. He looks to be in complete shock, whereas I'm smirking at him. I can't help it. He was so damn responsive to the kiss that it makes me wonder how responsive he'd be underneath me as I take him.

"That was" Damien murmurs, . . . trailing off.

"Fantastic, mind blowing, orgasmic" I suggest cheekily, folding my arms across my chest. He gives a shy nod.

"I didn't know it could feel like that" Damien mutters "I've never felt like this with a girl."

Neither have I, although I suspect it might have felt something like this with Candice, if she'd been willing to be mates instead of rejecting me in favour of Kai. I'll never know for sure.

I turn back to the bed and he sidles closer to me, not looking anywhere as apprehensive as he'd initially been when we entered the room.

"Do you have a preference?" I ask him and he blinks at me looking confused.

"I mean as to what side to sleep on? Does it matter?" I clarify and he slowly shakes his head.

"Feel free to sleep naked" I say wryly, watching as his face turns as red as a tomato.

"I think I'll sleep in my pants" he says shyly, taking his t-shirt off as I watch. My god, I think my heart just skipped a beat. He's glorious to behold, his abdomen taut with a six pack. There's no hair on his chest either. My eyes involuntarily dip to the waistband of his sweatpants, my own body tightening with arousal.



Keep it together Langdon, I mutter to myself in my mind. I shrug out of my own shirt and Damien looks flustered. Is it my imagination or is he staring down at a certain part of me? Well how interesting is that.

"How about you climb in first" I suggest. It's the part closest to the wall and means he'd literally have to climb over me to get out of the bed. I don't even feel bad about that.

"Alright" Damien mutters, walking forward and gingerly climbing into the bed, scooting over quickly.

"Do you want some water or anything first?" I offer, trying to at least be a good host.

He shakes his head. I shrug. Well, can't say I didn't try.

I get in, pulling the bed covers over us both. I'm not surprised when Damien rolls over with his back to me. I swear he's trying to drill holes in the wall with his staring. I move over, until I'm almost touching him and pull him back slightly as he wriggles in surprise.

"What are you doing?" he sputters indignantly.

"Cuddling with my mate" I say calmly, pulling him so that his back is against my chest. my arm over the side of him.

"But, but I don't want to cuddle" he exclaims and I sigh. Shame. I let go of him and he scoots back close to the wall. I'm not going to lie that stung, but I'm not about to force him to do something he doesn't want to do.

I try to content myself with the fact that he's at least in the bed with me. That's progress right? His body is so stiff and tense though, that I can't see him falling asleep comfortably. I spread myself out. Just because he's curled up into a small ball, doesn't mean I have to be uncomfortable with him. It looks like it's going to be a long night.

Much to my astonishment though, it's only several minutes later when Damien begins to snore, his body relaxing in his sleep. Man, he's loud, I think to myself with a chuckle. But he's definitely out of it. He's

even spread himself out somewhat, so that his leg is touching mine. He's also come a lot closer to me and as I watch, out of the corner of my eye, he backs up so that he's pressed against me. I have to smile. Even though he denies wanting to be near me, his body seems to have a mind of its own. Or maybe it's the mate bond working. It's hard to say.

I pull him against me, feeling his back against my chest. My cock twitches in my pants in response to feeling our mate, my body tensing up against his. He feels so good, so warm. His breathing evens out and his snoring goes quieter as I tentatively place my arm over the side of his body. His hair spreads out on my pillow and I wrinkle my nose as his hair touches me. I settle down, but I can't seem to stop staring at him. Everything about him is utter perfection. His jaw is strong, even clenched in his sleep, his hair is silky, even after spending so much time in the woods and his skin is deep golden and tanned from being outdoors so much. There's a roughness to him, the stubble on his face making him look more masculine. Just the way I like it, I realise, touching his hair softly with my hand. He wriggles in response and I stop before I accidentally wake him up.

My eyes close. I try hard not to think about my first mate, but Candice always comes to mind, whether I want her to or not. The pain of her rejecting me is still as fresh as the day it happened. Maybe with my mate, Damien, the pain will fade and go away. That is, if he decides he wants to be mates. The whole mate thing has thrown both of us for a loop after all, even though it's not exactly uncommon with werewolves. I don't want to reject him. My wolf has already wholeheartedly accepted Damien, wanting him just as much as I do.

The tension in my body begins to fade and I feel myself becoming drowsy. I wonder what Damien is dreaming about. Maybe he's dreaming about me? I feel my breathing evening out and my eyes becoming heavy. I'm tired, drained from the day's events. I'm exhausted. I also know that Kai is going to want to see me early tomorrow morning, especially with Winter's dangerous plan. I decide to enjoy my mate's company by my side and tighten my grip on him possessively. Damien is mine and no one is going to take him from me. I don't care what it takes to persuade him to remain mates, but I'm willing to do whatever it takes. I'm not about to let my second chance mate reject me as well, not if I can help it. I fall asleep, my snores mixing with Damien's, my body curled up against his, my lips pressed against his head. Neither of us, move away from each other during the night while we sleep, and when I wake up the very next morning, there is a massive smile on my face. You really cannot fight the mate bond. It was pointless to even try.

Chapter 83 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

I wake up to Kai giving my nose a kiss. I giggle at him. "Good morning sweetheart" he chirps. I guess he's one of those annoying morning people that wake up happy. I curl up in my blanket and eye him sleepily. I would much rather stay in bed.

He knows I'm not a morning person because he lets out a giant huff of resignation as he climbs out of bed. He makes a beeline for the bathroom and I close my eyes, so sleepy that I want to go back to sleep.

Then I hear the sound of running water and he comes back out, a smile on his face. Damn him for looking so cute, I think grumpily. It made it hard to be mad at him for waking me up.

"Winter, we really should get ready for the day" Kai tells me and I just groan and roll over.

It's so nice and warm under the blankets and I whine as he tries to take them off me. "It's too cold" I mumble and he laughs out loud.

"I started the shower for you" he offers as I blink up at him, unamused.

He picks me up as I shriek, kicking and wriggling in his arms. His eyes are gleaming now and he places me in the bathroom, folding his arms across his chest and staring me right in the face as I glare at him, my teeth chattering together from the cold.

"Shower" he orders and I glare at him some more, reluctantly getting in. Ahhh.

The water is warm, perfect, just the way I like it and as I warm up, I begin to eye Kai who's standing there naked, a smile on his face. I can't believe it but I open my mouth and almost purr "you could come join me."

Yes girl, get adventurous, that's the spirit Winter.

I cannot believe I just said that to him.

You better believe it alright, I'm so proud of you.

I don't think it's something to be proud of Sabriel, I sound like a real hornbag.

So?

Kai opens the shower door and I back up to give him room. His eyes are black now, his wolf close to the surface and I swallow nervously. What have I done?

He smirks at me as he grabs the washcloth. "Calm down" he teases me "this was your idea wasn't it?"

Yeah, but I guess I was hoping he wouldn't take me up on it. Stupid really.

He begins to wash me everywhere as I gasp, down my breasts, across my stomach and even between my legs as I moan. Fuck. I'm becoming aroused but a quick look at him shows I'm not the only one. His cock is standing to attention and my eyes hone in on it. I'm almost drooling at the thought of that cock inside of me.

He turns me to face the tiles, my hands up to keep my balance, spreading my legs out wide. I'm panting heavily at this stage, my head looking over my shoulder. He comes up behind me, one of his hands coming down to my pussy and slowly fingering along my folds as I gasp.

"Oh god, Kai" I choke out and he moves even closer, so that my back is right against his chest. He begins to circle my clit with his finger as I stiffen against him. Fuck. It feels so damn good. My whole body is trembling, the water of the shower still cascading over us.

He inserts one finger inside of me, slowly, pumping it back and forth as my back arches. He kisses the back of my neck at the same time and I moan, my legs barely holding me up, the pleasure becoming extremely intense. Another finger is pushed inside of me, stretching me, filling me, pumping inside and out as I stand there, helpless to do anything but feel.

"You're so fucking tight" Kai whispers from behind me, a low growl in his voice. I cry out in response.

I feel him curl up his fingers and begin to pound into me, faster and harder. I scream, almost sobbing from the pleasure, his fingers hitting my g-spot with astounding accuracy. My orgasm washes over me and I scream out "Kai" as I cum hard against his hand.

Kai's panting heavily behind me. He slowly withdraws his fingers and then moves them up to my mouth. I open my mouth and he places them inside as I taste my own juices. Then he pulls them out and licks them himself, his eyes never leaving my face.

"Delicious" he growls as I shudder.

He bends me over at an angle, my hands placed against the tiles again, legs spread apart. I can feel his hard cock at my entrance and I prepare myself as he thrusts into me, hard, all the way inside as I whimper.

"I didn't hurt you, did I?" he growls and I shake my head, feeling full, my walls clenching around his rock hard cock.

"No" I pant back "you didn't hurt me."

He withdraws and I want to cry at the loss of his cock, before he thrusts back inside, this time extremely slow, filling me inch by inch as I scrabble at the tiles.

"You like that" he grunts, holding firmly to my waist.

"God, yes" I sob, feeling completely out of control. He withdraws again and then pushes back in, just as slow as the last time as I mewl. God, I want him to move, harder, faster but he's setting the pace and something tells me that he's well aware of the reaction he's getting from me.

Another thrust and I mewl. He chuckles behind me. "Please, god, Kai, move" I beg him and he shakes his head.

"I'm setting the pace" he growls.

At this rate, he's going to kill me. He withdraws and slowly slides back in, prolonging it, going even slower than before, my eyes widening as he stuffs me full.

"Beg me for it" he growls, pulling me by the hair gently "beg me for my cock."

He doesn't even need to ask me to do that. I'm already begging.

"Kai, please, god" I pant out heavily "please fuck me harder."

He withdraws hard this time and slams back in. Fuck. That's more like it. My hips move back of their own accord to meet him as he begins to slam into me, hard, fast and raw. I'm screaming his name at the top of my lungs. He's thrusting as hard as he can. It's primal.

"I can't take much more" I moan, feeling the pleasure rising within me.

Kai just grunts and continues, holding me tightly by the waist with his large hands. I can hear our bodies smacking together. He bites me on the shoulder and I shriek, loving the feel of his teeth gently nip me.

My orgasm rips through me, I scream as I cum, his cock still inside of me. Kai continues to thrust inside me over and over again as I tremble, prolonging the orgasm even more. He goes even harder and faster, slamming into me at a furious pace, then I hear him growl and stiffen, spilling his seed inside of me as his body relaxes.

"Fuck" he groans, placing his head on my shoulder as I relax against him, his cock slowly sliding out. "You're too damn irresistible" he complains.

"Same here" I mutter "you're too good looking for your own good."

He snorts. "I think I'll leave you to finish getting washed up, before this turns into round two" he says with a grin. I watch him walk away reluctantly.

We totally could have gone another round Winter, Should we call him back?

Um no? I'm actually pretty sore right now and we do have things to do today?

Fine, but I gotta tell you, that was totally hot right there. I'm all hot and bothered.

Sabriel!

Alright, alright. I'm going. But I still think you're getting pretty adventurous and I like it.

I finish washing myself up, especially between my legs and stumble out of the shower. Kai, I notice, slightly disappointed is already dressed in his comfortable sweatpants and shirt. I would have liked to watch him getting dressed. Damn. He gives me a smile.

"Can I steal your sweatpants and top" I mumble wanting them as comfort and because they smell like him.

He raises an eyebrow but shrugs and fetches them for me, throwing them as I catch them easily.

I put them on.

"What's the plan?" I ask, in a far better mood now, than I was when he first woke me up. I guess the endorphins will do that to you. Or maybe it's just getting laid in general.

He smirks. "Breakfast and talking to your brother and butthead" he mutters.

"I think you mean Johnathon" I say wryly with a roll of my eyes. He just chuckles.

"Please don't call him butthead" I mutter "it's not polite Kai."

"I can think of a hundred different names I'd like to call him" Kai argues back and I just sigh. I'm not about to get in an argument with the stubborn man.

"Let's go downstairs" he says, holding out his arm to me and waiting for me to take it. "We'll get some breakfast and discuss this plan of yours properly. Besides, Langdon has mind-linked me and I happen to know that Damien and him are waiting for us in the dining area."

I smile. "Can you believe that Langdon and my brother are mates?" I ask enthusiastically "I wonder how last night went."

"I think you should not ask that" Kai said with laughter in his voice "some things between a brother and sister should remain private. Unless you want to tell him what we were up to last night and this morning?"

"Ew, no" I exclaim, seeing his point.

We begin to walk downstairs and into the kitchen. Kai gives me a peck on the cheek. "What do you want for breakfast?" he asks.

I eye him thoughtfully. I'm pretty sure he can't cook because I haven't really seen him in the kitchen and omegas normally fetch him food.

"Cereal" I answer, watching as his face looks relieved. Yep, pretty sure the man can't cook. Still at least he was nice enough to offer.

I join the others at the table, seeing that Langdon and Damien have already finished eating and Johnathon is scowling down at a bowl of cereal. Did he not like it?

Kai comes back and shoves a bowl in front of me. I start to eat, Kai sitting beside me and then push the bowl aside when I'm finished. No one speaks. But, I do notice with a smile, that Langdon is holding Damien's hand under the table. How adorable is that?



"So" Kai says, all business now that he's finished eating "we need to discuss the plan that Winter came up with last night."

"About that" I pipe in "if I'm going to be bait, then you need to reduce security measures, not increase them. You actually have to give Thomas the opportunity to come and get me."

Kai looks displeased by this, Johnathon looks pissed.

"It's a stupid plan" Johnathon mutters, looking at me coldly "you'll get yourself killed this way."

I'm hurt. "Johnathon this is the best way. Otherwise it's going to take too long. You really want to be away from your pack for a long period of time?" I ask pointedly.

He looks away.

"Look, Winter has a point. I might not like it either, but I can see where she's coming from" Damien says with a sigh "I think her plan is the best one to go with. We just have to be extra cautious and plan for everything, every contingency we can think of."

I agree with that. So does Kai.

We bend our heads together and the whole table begins to speak in hushed whispers as everyone offers their opinion on what to do. Everyone, except Johnathon that is.

Chapter 84 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

I'm not sure exactly that this is going to work. I've been walking in the woods for several days now and there hasn't been a single peep or attempt from Thomas. Maybe he decided it wasn't worth it to come after me? A girl can hope right? Maybe he even found his mate on his travels. Wouldn't that be something? Then he wouldn't need me, would he?

Girl you are way too optimistic for your own good Winter

Isn't it better to be an optimist than a pessimist Sabriel. Besides it could happen right?

Maybe, but at this rate, you're just avoiding the truth. He hasn't found his mate and he's still coming for you. You can't afford to let your guard down girl.

But it's been days Sabriel, not just a few, it's been almost a week and nothing's happened.

Doesn't mean we let our guard down. That man is insane, or have you forgotten the last incident? I might not have been there for that, but I can access your memories and they're not good ones.

I know. But I was weaker back then with no wolf. Now I have you.

You're confidence in me is very humbling.

I love you Sabriel.

Love you the mostest Girl.

I sigh. The sun looks like it's going to set soon and my legs are tired. Damien, Johnathon, Langdon and of course Kai, are all stationed around the grounds. There's two snipers but I'm not holding my breath. Being in the forest means taking a shot is going to be difficult with all the trees and overhanging branches. My stomach is growling with hunger.

I mind-link Kai, feeling annoyed and very hungry. Both are not a good combination for me. It makes me extremely grumpy.

Kai, I'm going to come in, in a few minutes. Nothing's happening out here. I don't think he's out there.

I don't sense anything in the woods either. Damn it. This wait is driving me crazy.

How do you think I feel? I'm the one who's out here for bait!

I know sweetheart, I just hate waiting.

Well so do I, you might as well tell the others to head inside. This is just a complete waste of time. Plus I'm hungry.

Do you want the snipers to stay?

Yes, at least until I've made my way back to the pack house. I feel safer that way.

No problems, I'll meet you back at the pack house.

Meet you there.

I shut the mind link off and sigh. At least the sunset is beautiful, I think to myself wryly. I always did like to watch it set. Would it really hurt to spend a few more minutes out here before heading inside? Considering it seems to be fairly safe. I wish Kai was out here to watch it with me. It would have been very romantic, well maybe except for the tension of waiting for Thomas to make his bloody move. If he didn't make it soon, I was going to go insane.

I can see the glint of the snipers as I wander slowly back to the grounds. The sunlight makes it stand out, and I make a mental note to let Kai know about that. The sound of rustling leaves, makes me stiffen and slowly turn. But there's a breeze which explains the noise, but then I hear the crack of a twig. My heart begins to thump wildly in my chest. Get a grip Winter, I chide myself, remember that the snipers are still out there and you can mind-link for help if need be. Stop being such a wuss.

A rabbit, a fucking rabbit comes out of the woodworks and skids upon seeing me. I almost laugh at the absurdness of it all. I just let myself be frightened by a goddamned animal. I shake my head and chuckle. Wait until I told Kai this, he'd laugh his absolute ass off. So would Damien. I smile at that.

Damien and Langdon have gotten closer the last few days. Not so close that I think they've done the deed, but close enough to show some signs of public affection. They hold hands and I've even caught them kissing once or twice. Damien went as red as a beetroot when I caught them. I think it's sweet. They look so handsome together and Langdon is a really good catch, at least as far as I'm concerned. After being rejected by Candice, he more than deserves to be happy. I just hope Damien doesn't break his heart, like Candice did. He still hasn't made his mind up about continuing to be mates with Langdon, but the way they act around each other, gives me hope that they'll agree to it. Besides, Damien really really seems to be into him and I know Langdon feels the same way.

I still can't work Johnathon out. He constantly seems to be in a bad mood and scowling at me. I don't understand why he felt the need to travel all this way and help me after all this time apart. Not to mention, he chose to reject me, not the other way around. Is he upset that I've finally found my happiness with my second chance mate? Because he had his chance and he made his choice. If he's regretting it, that's on him, not me. I just wish he'd smile more or at least try to be happy for me. Instead he's coming across as a jealous ex boyfriend and that's alarming me right there. What if he turns out to be another Thomas? I don't care how nice he seems to be, when it comes to Johnathon I'm not letting my guard down. Part of me thinks he's here for some other ulterior motive and even Sabriel agrees.

Kai seems to be readily accepting of Damien and Langdon being mates, even though I know he still holds a grudge towards my brother for the past and how he treated me. They might not get along real well at the moment, but I can see that he's slowly softening towards Damien a little bit. That's all I really want for him to do, was try to get along. After all there's every chance that Damien will want to stay with Langdon, which means he'll most probably, fingers crossed, end up living here in this pack. Then I'll have my brother close to me. That sounds awesome. Especially since Damien is making every effort to spend quality time with me whenever he can, well at least when he can force himself away from his mate Langdon. They make such a cute couple. Langdon looks happy. After Candice, he deserves a mate that cares for him, so if Damien stuffs this up, I'm going to kill him.

I sigh and breathe in the cool evening air. It's starting to get slightly chilly and the sun has fully set. I've been so lost in my thoughts that time has completely passed me by without me being aware of it. No doubt Kai is probably wondering where the hell I am and what's taking me so long to get back. But it's only been a few minutes from what I can tell, so he shouldn't be too angry. After all I am entitled to some peace and quiet when I can get it, aren't I? Especially since I've been on edge for hours now.

I walk to the edge of the grounds and lift my arm up. That's strange, the sniper rifles can't be seen anymore, but then I realise with the sunlight gone, I'm not going to be able to see them. I shrug. Then I hear a strange whirring sound and spin around, only to feel something embed itself in my leg. It stings.

"Fuck" I curse out loud, glancing down to see a tranquilizer dart in my leg. No, no, no this can't be happening, I chant to myself, why didn't I go back to the pack house instead of wasting time out here. I can smell the scent of wolfsbane and stiffen, pulling the dart out, blood trickling from the wound. Great, now I can't even mind-link for help.

My eyes frantically scan the grounds but there's no sign of anyone. I begin to limp towards the pack house but there's a sudden rush of wind and the next thing I know, I'm being swept up off the floor, by a pair of incredibly strong arms. My body feels heavy, too heavy and my limbs don't want to cooperate or move when I try it. I'm turned away and the person, whoever it is, takes me deeper into the woods instead.

My vision is blurry and I blink several times to focus. I open my mouth to scream but all that comes out is a gurgle. How much wolfsbane was in that dart? I stare up into the person's face, confused. This wasn't Thomas? Was it? His eyes are a glowing red, and his arms are heavily muscled, his body more thick than I remember. He stares down at me, smirking, his arms gripping me so tightly it's painful.

I'm helpless, feeling like a rag doll as he runs. He's fast. Incredibly fast. The trees pass by in a blur, I can tell, even with my blurred vision, and he's faster than a shifter is. Is this the result of him being a hybrid? I can also smell the metallic scent of blood on him, seeing small droplets on his clothes. Who did he kill? I suck in a breath. Did he kill the snipers? Was that why I couldn't see them? Or had he killed patrol warriors? My god, I'm responsible for someone's death. At least Damien and the others were safe in the pack house, or at least I hoped they had been.

Has Kai noticed I'm missing yet? I can't mind-link to my frustration and my stupid body won't move, not that I want Thomas to drop me. So far the bastard hasn't said a single word. I can feel nausea and realise it's due to the wolfsbane he's given me, my stomach rolling and bile rising up in my throat. It's taking all my concentration not to be sick on him.

"I finally have you" he chuckles darkly and my spirits plummet.

I would know that voice anywhere. It haunts me in my dreams at nighttime. It's definitely Thomas.

I try to speak again but again just a garbled mutter. He laughs.

"Don't worry, the wolfsbane isn't a fatal amount. It will wear off and then I'll give you another dosage" he tells me. Not exactly reassuring. If he continues to give me wolfsbane it means keeping me weak and if I'm weak then I can't fight back. I shudder at the thought of him having complete control over me. I don't even want to think about why he wants the complete control, not after the last incident. I already know.

I would rather die than go through that again. He's careful, leaping over branches, the wind blowing my hair around every which way. My eyelids are heavy, I struggle to keep them open. The last thing I want to do is fall asleep. There's a twisted smile on Thomas's face and I notice the large fangs protruding out of his mouth. It's true then, that he's half vampire, half shifter now. God, please don't let him drain my blood, I think to myself. Although I'd prefer that to him forcing me.

"Not long now" he murmurs and I'm astonished at how much ground we've covered and disheartened. How was it that Damien and Johnathon beat him to my pack? When he can run like this for long distances? He must have made a mistake and gone in the wrong direction, it's the only thing that makes sense.

I'm terrified by what he'll do to me when we reach whatever destination he has in mind. Something tells me it's not at a pack. No, I think desperately, my eyes beginning to shut. Not now. Don't do this to me, I plead in my mind, but my body isn't listening to my desperate pleas. My eyelids close shut and refuse to open. My body is beginning to feel like it's floating. The tranquilizer is beginning to set in and I curse in my mind. The last thing I remember before falling into a deep and heavy sleep, is Thomas kissing me on the forehead and muttering "soon you'll be mine forever Winter, till death do us part."

Chapter 85 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Kai POV

I head inside, after telling Damien, Johnathon and Langdon that for today, it's all over and dusted with again. There's been no sign of this asshole Thomas and it's frustrating as all fuck. Where was the bastard hiding? Was he even coming for Winter or was this all made up by Damien, to keep his sister afraid? I'm suspicious of the lot of them and I don't like the fact that Winter is out there, putting herself on the line as bait. It's not fair. It's not right to ask her to put herself in danger like that.

Our mate will be fine Kai. She's strong and she has an inner strength that will do her well.

Yeah well I don't trust Damien and Johnathon. What if they're lying to us?

Why would they lie?

Because Storm, Johnathon wants Winter as his mate. Don't think I haven't seen the way he looks at her, when he thinks I can't see him. He thinks he can get another chance with her.

He's not getting his hands on our mate, but I don't think he's lying. I think that you're jealous.

You telling me you're not Storm? He was her mate first after all. Even if he did reject her.

Oh I'm jealous but if he steps out of line, I'll rip the bastard to shreds. You're just being too nice. It's unlike you.

That's cause Winter will kill me if I do anything to harm them. I promised her I wouldn't.

True, just give them a chance. After all, if Winter trusts them, then maybe we should as well.

I'll think about it I tell Storm grumpily, cutting him off.

The boys head into the study which becomes dangerously crowded and confined with everyone in there. It's very claustrophobic.

"w should have stayed out there longer" Damien protests to me "isn't he more likely to strike at night time?"

I glower at him. Johnathon fidgets in the chair and Langdon looks completely neutral. Bastard. Where's the loyalty? Stupid mate bond, making him all googly eyed at Damien. I scowl at the both of them.

"I'm not having Winter out there at nighttime" I say dangerously quiet "it's bad enough that she's out there until now. Night time is just asking for trouble" I huff.

"It could be the reason he hasn't attacked though" Langdon speaks up and I scowl at him. Now he wants to talk! He sees the look on my face and falls silent. Smart man. My hands are itching to place themselves around someones, anyone's throat.

"She's not going to be out there at night time" I reiterate and Johnathon just sighs and stares out the window. What the hell is his problem? Would he dare ask his mate to do the same thing? I don't think so.

"I think that's a mistake" Damien protests while Langdon clears his throat, looking at me pointedly. "He's a hybrid now remember? Don't vampires prefer the nighttime?"

I eye him coldly. "For a brother, you seem awfully keen to put your sister into danger" I growl pointedly.

He goes pale. I'm not finished yet. I lean back against my chair and intertwine my fingers, regarding the lot of them with contempt, well except for Langdon. I just stare at him annoyed. "For all I know you've been lying about Thomas coming for Winter" I thunder "and if that's the case, it would be best for you to come clean right now."

Damien explodes. "We wouldn't have travelled all this way to lie about something like this. I get that your my sister's mate but I'm her brother and I love her. I want her to be safe" he snapped.

"She wasn't exactly safe from you though, was she back then?" I ask and he trembles beneath my glare. He knows precisely what I'm talking about because he avoids my gaze, rubbing the back of his neck and looking remorseful. Part of me enjoyed getting that small dig in.

What in the hell is taking Winter so long to come back? I frown. I know how much she enjoys the sunset but still, she could have at least mind-linked me if she was planning on staying out to watch it. I try to mind-link her and frown. Nothing. I can't get through to her at all. I start to feel slightly panicked and turn to Langdon.

"Can you mind-link Winter at all?" I ask slowly and he blinks at me surprised but tries while I watch. A frown comes onto his face and I begin to panic. Fuck. This isn't good.



"No" he breathes "I'm not getting through to her at all."

Well she hasn't blocked me then, not that I thought she had.

My eyes meet Damien's who looks panicked. "The snipers" I say and try them, perplexed when I can't mind-link them either. I stand up. Either the snipers are out of commission and can't mind-link or it's something worse. I feel dread in my gut. Don't let it be what I think it is. I race out towards the nearest sniper and halt in my tracks. The smell of blood is potent, drifting in the air and my stomach churns with disgust. I'm forced to step around the tree and there, is one of my pack members, a trusted sniper, lying there. That wasn't the most horrific thing though. It looked like he'd been drained of blood, he was that incredibly pale but Thomas had done far worse than that. The snipers guts were literally ripped open and left all along the floor, vital organs missing. I feel nauseas and am fighting not to be sick. In all my years as an Alpha, I've never seen anything so horrendous. He showed no mercy or compassion to the poor shifters who were now dead.

"Mother of god" whispers Langdon, kneeling beside the body. The eyes are blankly staring up at the sky. "I bet the other sniper is in the same condition" I say grimly.

Johnathon and Damien are quiet. "We need to find Winter" Damien says to me shakily, his eyes never leaving the body that's lying there, right in the open. Patrol are mind-linking me and I close my eyes, listening.

Alpha Kai, there's signs of a struggle in the forest where Winter was last seen.

Stay there, I'm coming. Any sign of Winter?

None, we're all searching now for her. We didn't hear any screams or signs she was in danger, I'm sorry that we've failed you Alpha Kai.

Never mind, get the best trackers we have out here. I want every available one out there searching for her.

Already done it sir.

Right, give me a minute and we'll meet you there. Don't move.

I will be right here waiting.

I cut the mind link off. "Come with me" I growl at everyone and we head towards the forest where Winter was last seen, where she'd been pacing back and forth for Thomas to come get her. I feel disgusted in myself. How many times am I going to fail my mate? How many times am I going to curse myself for my stupidity? She could be going through hell right now and it was because I let my guard down.

Seth, the warrior who mind-linked me, met me at the edge of the forest. She must have been coming back in, then, when she was attacked. He brandishes something at me, that he's clutching in his hand.

"What is it?" I growl and he hands it to me.

It's a small tranquiliser dart. I give it a sniff and raise my eyebrows. "Wolfsbane" I mutter "no wonder I can't mind-link her."

"We're wasting time" Johnathon shouts as I stare at him "Winter is out there, with a madman and we're wasting time when we should be out there looking for her. Are you insane" he almost screams at me.

I'm being patient. The little pup is distraught after all, but if he continues, I'm going to fling his ass into the dungeon.

"Calm down pup" I mutter and turn to Seth. "Was she wearing the bracelet, that I gave her?"

He gives a smirk and a nod. "Yes Alpha Kai, she was."

"Excellent, fetch Morgan" I demand and he nods, disappearing slightly.

"Who the hell is Morgan?" asks Damien.

"Wait and see."

Sure enough, Morgan comes trailing towards me. He pushes his large spectacles up his nose and greets me with a grim expression on his face. "Sorry about Winter, Alpha Kai" he says remorsefully.

"Never mind that" I cut in impatiently "can you bring up Winter's location?"

"Sure" he says easily, opening up his laptop.

"Kai" Langdon says, apparently cottoning on "did you put a gps tracker on Winter's bracelet?"

"It's embedded in it. Winter doesn't even know that it's tracking her movements."

"Genius" whistles Langdon and even Damien is looking far less hysterical now.

Johnathon is continuing to scowl in the background. I shrug. Can't help everyone. But if he doesn't stop soon, I'm going to wipe his anger off his face with a well aimed fist.

It takes a minute for Morgan to locate the gps signal but when he does he shows it to me on screen, his eyes wide in disbelief. "It's moving incredibly fast" he breathes "faster than a shifter can move. It makes tracking it difficult because it keeps jumping off the screen" he adds annoyed. Shit.

"Can you keep tracking it?"

"I can" he says slowly "but your best bet is to go in the same direction and hope that he eventually stops. Otherwise you're never going to catch up to him" he murmurs, peering at his laptop screen. Damn. Fucking hybrid bastard.

"Right" I say decisively, turning to the small group "I'm leaving to go after Winter. Morgan, do you have ear pieces we can use to communicate with you."

"Of course" he says putting the laptop down and retrieving another case I hadn't even noticed until now. "But they're not going to work in your wolf forms. You'll have to go by car" he says.

"That's fine. It will be slower but as you said, he has to stop at some stage" I murmur "we'll just have to rely on that."

"I'm coming too" Damien growls.

"Me too" Johnathon snaps.

I roll my eyes and look over at Langdon who is fidgeting nervously. "Let me guess" I say wryly "you want to come as well."

"I would" Langdon says formally "but if you require me to stay back at the pack, then I'll follow your instructions Alpha Kai."

"No, you can come. That way you can stop her brother here" I point to a stunned Damien "from doing anything stupid" I finish. Even though I suspect that Johnathon is the one that I have to keep an eye on.

Morgan hands over the ear pieces. "It's a pleasure to help you sir" he says shyly and I have to remind myself that he's only sixteen years old as I place the piece in my ear. "You should be able to hear me now" he adds and I nod impressed. This gadget is cool.

"Right, Johnathon, you're coming in the car with me" I growl, while mind-linking several warriors to follow us as well, "Damien and Langdon, you can both go together in Langdon's car."

They nod. Good. I'm not wasting time with arguments. I thank Morgan and run towards the garage, getting into the drivers seat and waiting impatiently for Johnathon to get in the passenger seat. I don't say a word, turning the key in the ignition and pulling out with a squeal of my tires.

"Head south east" Morgan's voice comes into my head. I already have a gps tracker installed in my car as does every other pack member, so he can easily locate us. I follow his instructions, Langdon and Johnathon right behind me.

Hold on Winter, I think to myself grimly, trying not to think about what she's going through. Just hold on a little longer baby, we're coming to save you. Be brave sweetheart, be brave. I'm going to kill that fucker for daring to lay a hand on you.

## Chapter 86 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

### Winter POV

It's dark. That's the first thing I notice when I open my eyes. My eyelids feel gritty and I wipe them with the back of my hand, cursing at the feeling of silver restraints preventing me from doing much else. Fuck. This is bringing back some horrible memories of the last time, but when I glance around, there's no one there. I don't know where I am, let alone how far we travelled but something tells me it had to have been a fair distance. My bracelet has been taken by Thomas, the one that Kai gave me.

Hopefully Kai has noticed I've gone missing but I'm not sure how well they'll do at tracking me when Thomas can move so unbelievably fast. He's twice as fast, maybe triple what a shifter is. I scan the room and frown puzzled. There's pews sitting in the room and when I try to whip my head around, I can see an altar of some kind sitting there, a large cross in the background. There are candles burning in the far corner, but other than that, there's no other lighting at all.

Where the fuck am I? I suck in a breath as realisation dawns. I'm in a church, Thomas has taken me to a fucking church. I can't even tell if it's abandoned or if he's killed anyone that lives here. I desperately hope it's the former. Maybe he's just brought me here to sleep? But my heart is thumping wildly in my chest and my mouth feels incredibly dry. I'm so thirsty and my stomach is growling with hunger. How much time has passed since Thomas kidnapped me?

My legs are chained together and I hiss, uncomfortable as the silver digs into my skin, burning it. Still, I struggle and persevere, managing to get to my feet without toppling over. A small success. I try to mind-link Sabriel. She answers immediately.

Winter, you don't have much time until Thomas comes back. I don't know if this is a good idea.

What do you want me to do Sabriel? Lie back down and just wait for him to come back, to do god knows what to us? No way, I'd rather die.

I'm sure Kai is trying to track us down. He knows we're missing by now, and don't forget that Damien, Johnathon and even Langdon will be out searching for us.

I still don't want to rely on them to save me Sabriel, I'm kind of getting sick of it to be honest.

Don't talk like that. There's nothing wrong with needing help Winter. It doesn't make you weak.

But it makes me feel weak Sabriel and I'm tired of feeling that way.

She says nothing more to me but I can sense her anxiety as I do an awkward hop towards the pews. I have no plan, other than to get the hell out of there before Thomas comes back from wherever the hell he's gone. I make it halfway, cursing, panting, sweat dripping off my forehead, when I sense I'm not alone. Fuck. I waited too long, took too much time. I raise my head as the doors bang wide open, two red glowing eyes glaring at me. I swallow nervously and lose my balance, toppling over face first. Sabriel was right. I should have just waited instead of trying to escape.

I give an angry shriek as Thomas picks me up like a sack of potatoes and deposits me, hard, back in my original location as I scowl up at him. He looks pissed off. He's also clutching a grocery bag in his hand. I really hope that his eyes weren't glowing while he was supposedly shopping or stealing. For all I know we're residing in a human town.

"Seriously Winter" he barks "you try to escape the second I'm gone" he explodes.

I cringe from the anger in his voice. But what does he honestly expect from me? To lie still and be a good little prisoner?

"Here" he mutters, throwing the bag at my feet.

I look at him tentatively and reluctantly reach for it. There's a bottle of water and a bagel in it. I eye it, my mouth watering as Thomas folds his arms over his chest.

"It's not poisoned" he says when I shoot him a suspicious glance.

I debate my options. I can't trust Thomas, but my stomach hurts, it's in that much hunger. The water bottle looks relatively safe, and I unscrew the lid and take a good long swallow, feeling the coldness against my dry throat in welcome relief. The bagel looks alright to me and I tentatively take a bite, almost moaning from the taste of it, my stomach churning in appreciation.

I swallow the food and take another bite, Thomas's eyes on me the entire time.

"Thomas" I rasp out, finishing the last few bites of bagel and feeling satisfied, even though I'm not completely full "why am I here? It's not to be friends so spit it out" I almost snarl, my temper igniting again. Sabriel is still quiet in my mind and it's a little disheartening. Is she really that afraid of Thomas?

"Of course it's not to be friends" Thomas laughs lightly, sounding incredulous and giving me a disbelieving look. "I want so much more than that" he growls coming closer. My heart sinks. I thought this might be the case, but to hear it come from his lips is causing me to become paralysed with fear.

My heart beats painfully, reminding me that for now, I am still alive. He comes close and I shiver as he reaches over and grasps a large chunk of my hair, sniffing it and giving a low growl. "You smell so nice" he almost purrs and I shudder "but then you always did smell so sweet to me" he says cocking his head. "Like a meadow of flowers. Not like all those other girls" he scowls "they just reek of cheap perfume and cigarettes. By the way you can thank me" he adds and I stare at him confused.

"I know what the girls did to you" he says softly "the way they tried to kill you for my supposed death? Jessica was the main culprit wasn't she? I took care of her for you."

I feel bile rising up in my throat and close my eyes, forcing myself to breathe and not throw up the meagre contents of my stomach.

"What do you mean, you took care of her?" I ask and he gives a small chuckle.

"I guess I have to spill it out for you" he says amused "I killed her and not quickly either. I did it before I actually left our small town" he says calmly "which is why it took a little longer to get here. I had to hide the body and the evidence. You should have seen the look on her face, when she saw me. She was so happy" he chortled, shaking his head "and then when she realised why I was there, well" he paused

"then you should have heard her screams. Ah they were delightful" he murmurs "worth being a little longer so that I can show you how much I love you."

I stare at him horrified. He killed Jessica. I can't believe it. As much as I had hated that bitch, she hadn't deserved to die at Thomas's hand on my behalf. I can't even imagine the torture he would have put her through either. I can't help it, I lean over to the side and puke my guts up while Thomas hastily backs away and wrinkles his nose.

"Winter" he admonishes me and I look at him helplessly as he wipes my mouth with the back of his shirt and gives me more water. Tears prick the corner of my eyes.

"I also thought I took care of your damn brother" swears Thomas "but I should have been more careful. I saw him, and that annoying son of a bitch Johnathon at the pack. I'm not stupid, not to mention the Alpha and you."

"The Alpha and me" I say quietly and watch his eyes go even redder.

"You're mates, aren't you" he spits out, his hands clenching into fists "I saw the way you looked at each other when you thought it was safe. I see the mark on you" he hisses "I can't believe you would betray me like that" he whispers.

I haven't betrayed you, you psychotic son of a bitch, I want to yell out loud, but instead I bite my lip and look away, Thomas breathing heavily in what I'm hoping is an attempt to calm the hell down.

"It doesn't matter" he murmurs "I can undo the mark and we can still be together. You will be my chosen mate" he vows and I look at him panicked.

What did he mean by removing or undoing my mark? That's impossible isn't it? He had to be lying, trying to scare me, I decide, but a small part of me isn't so sure. Especially with the way he's licking his lips.

His fangs slowly come out of hiding and gleam in the darkness with the candlelight flickering over them. It's almost like being trapped inside a horror movie. He cocks his head at me as my eyes widen.



"Thomas we can work this out" I plead desperately, hoping to distract him.

"We are working this out" he mutters "don't think that I'm not aware you're being tracked" he snaps "by that precious Alpha mate of yours and that annoying brother. They're ruining my plans" he snarls.

I try to back away but can't as he kneels over me. He licks his lips again. "I'm hungry" he whispers "and I want that mark gone Winter. You're only going to bear my mark for now and forever" he says vehemently.

I stare at him, tears trailing down my cheeks. "Thomas, don't do this to me" I beg "please, don't drain my blood."

He laughs, loudly, his head thrown back. "I'm not going to drain your blood" he sneers "I just want a taste, plus I need to bite you, to mark you" he growls.

I feel his hand grip the back of my neck as I begin to sob, his grip strong enough that I can't move as he pushes my head to the side, exposing the nape of my neck to him. He trails a finger down it, tracing my mark as I sob.

"Don't worry" he whispers, in an effort to be reassuring "it will only hurt for a minute" he promises. I say nothing, trying to wriggle my body but it doesn't do any good. His grip is just too strong. I feel ashamed. Kai is going to be upset if our mark is removed. It was his official claim on me, and I treasure it.

I feel his fangs slowly piercing me, right in the centre of the mark, Thomas biting down as I shriek at him to stop. Pain floods my body as I feel him sucking at my blood, his hand never once moving. It's excruciating. It feels like I'm slowly dying. How much blood is he going to take? I'm so hazy now. My entire body is tense though as he continues to make small moans as he feeds on me.

"So delicious" he mutters, and to my relief I feel his fangs slowly withdrawing, the pain slowly fading along with. I shudder at the feel of his coarse tongue on my skin as he seals the wound closed. I frantically look at the nape of my neck and my heart skips a beat. Kai's mark is gone. It's completely gone and instead there's puncture marks on my neck. Thomas looks pleased. "Now all I have to do is bite you with my shifter teeth and you're mine" he crows.

I'm in shock, my body feeling like it's floating. I make a strangled noise, one of anguish as I fall face down to the floor. Thomas rolls me over and all I see is his eyes looking down at me. "I forgot to mention that it will make you pass out again" he says nonchalantly as I close my eyes in resignation. The last thing I hear before I succumb to the darkness surrounding me, is his voice "get ready because I want you to perform the ceremony when she wakes up."

## Chapter 87 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

### Damien POV

I'm fuming when we get in the car. Kai's so called plan for keeping my sister safe, was an absolute joke. Look where it's gotten us! Winter's been kidnapped by Thomas, despite us warning her. He sucks as a mate for my sister. I never should have trusted him with her, no matter how much Winter tried to convince me to. As it is, my hands are clenched into fists when we begin to pull out. If I could have gotten my hands on Alpha Kai, I would have hit him for failing her and us. This was all his fault. Part of me though, recognises it's my fault as well and that I should share the blame in this.

Langdon reaches over to take my hand and I reluctantly let him, feeling the usual sparks tingling in my body when we touch. Straight away I calm down and I know it's because of him. He looks grim, focussed on the driving, shooting me sidelong glances every so often, as though to make sure I'm alright. I'm not. All I can think about is the fact that I've failed to protect her once again. I should have fought harder for a different plan instead of going along with it. I should have come up with something that would have been better than this failure. My god, I'm a useless excuse of a brother.

The car swerves, sending me flying into the window, Langdon easily doing way over the speed limit and looking unconcerned about it. "Hey" he says as I straighten myself back up again "It's going to be alright. We're going to find your sister" he adds vehemently. I just blink at him. He doesn't understand, does he. How much does he know about Thomas and what he attempted to do to her the last time? How much has Winter actually divulged to him? Something tells me she held some stuff back.

"What if we're not in time?" I ask dully "what if we're too late to save her."

He falls silent and I stare out the window, glaring at the stupid scenery.

"You and Winter are close, aren't you?" he asks slowly.

I have to think about the answer. To be truthful we're not as close as I'd like but I like to think that we're at least good friends.

"We're sort of close" I answer Langdon who gives a small nod and pulls into the next lane.

"I know about your father" he says softly and I'm stunned.

Had Winter divulged her past to Langdon, or had Kai spilled her secrets?

"Your sister told me" he says casually.

My heart sinks. Does that mean she told him all about me and what I'd done? My spirits deflate like a lead balloon. He notices my distress.

"She told me all about you Damien" he says quietly, reaching over and gripping my hand tightly "I know what you did, how you bullied her at school and at home. But I also know that you had a drunken alcoholic son of a bitch father, that encouraged you to do those things, and who I know you were afraid of. I'm not judging you here. You did what you had to do to survive. Anyone would have done the same in your shoes."

"That doesn't excuse any of it" I say harshly, yanking my hand back. watching as the scenery passes by in a blur. "I could have stood up to him and told him no. I could have stopped bullying her at school and let her at least be in peace there. Instead I made her life a living hell." My voice trembles.

He gives me a sympathetic look, but I'm not looking for sympathy. I deserve everything that happens to me and more.

"She also told me about how you changed, not long before she ran away. How you became the big brother she'd always wanted and needed. She talked about you all the time Damien. You were always in her thoughts. I can only imagine how guilty she felt when she didn't communicate with you once she reached the pack. She loves you Damien" he tells me firmly "I believe she always has, despite everything."

I'm silent. How Winter can love me, forgive the past, continues to astonish me. It's that kind of nature that caused her to be bullied so relentlessly. Because back then she never stood up for herself. My eyes meet Langdon's. "I don't know what I'm going to do, if we get there too late" I choke out "I can't bear to think of her being hurt,,," I trail off "or worse." I don't even want to think of the worse. I want to get my hands on Thomas, choke him, make sure he never harms poor Winter ever again.

Langdon sighs. "We can't predict the future Damien, all we can do is focus on the present. But what I will say, and point out, is that Alpha Kai is beating himself up right now over Winter being kidnapped. Just like you are" he points out with a sigh.

I don't want to hear it. I blame Kai for all of this. "The plan was his idea" I point out angrily "I said it was a stupid one."

Langdon sighs. "Winter agreed to it, Damien, she even added to the plan. Do you think Winter is stupid" he points out, and I scowl at him blackly. How dare he imply that. I don't like the way he turned my question around. Stupid logical Langdon.

Suddenly he pulls over. "What are you doing?" I ask nervously.

He holds up a hand and gestures for me to be quiet. It must be the ear piece. I frown. I hadn't been given one, only Kai and Langdon. I would kill to know what was going on right now. It must be important for Langdon to have pulled over when we were only just behind Kai as it was. Langdon is listening intently. There's a bewildered look on his face and he looks pissed. He's cocking his head and shaking it. I wonder what the person on the other end of the earpiece is saying.

What the hell is going on? I almost want to grab him by the shoulders and shake him back and forth, screaming in his face for answers, and it's taking all my self control not to do that and to wait patiently for him to finish. When he finally turns to me, there's a nervous look in his eyes. Something tells me, I'm about to lose it, especially since Langdon's making no move to touch me or calm me down in any way shape or form.

"I need you to remain calm" Langdon says evenly.

Big mistake. He probably should have led with something else, because my temper, which is close to the surface anyway, ignites.

"Spit it out" I snarl "tell me what's going on Langdon. Why did we stop?"

He bites his lip and looks away for a minute. I think he's trying to gather his thoughts and is thinking about what to say. I fold my arms across my chest impatiently.

"Okay, well the thing is" he starts after exhaling heavily "that Winter's location has disappeared. It looks like Thomas has either gotten rid of Winter's bracelet, or managed to break the tracking device."

I swear, long and loud, wanting to do nothing more than thump the steering wheel or break a window. Fuck. Now what are we going to do? We were relying on that tracking device for heavens sake. How are we going to find her now?

"But" Langdon says tentatively "we do have her last location. It's our best shot" he answers looking grim. "We'll have to find her once we reach there."

I glare at him. "What good is knowing her last location, if they decide to start moving again" I explode "what you really mean is that we've lost her and we've lost her for good."

"Not true" denies Langdon "according to Morgan, they've been in the same location for more than an hour. It's possible they've stopped to rest and we can catch up with them" he says calmly. He's too damn calm for my liking.

He steps back inside the car. "What are we waiting for then" I growl as he starts the car back up, glances in the rearview mirror and then peels out.

"Morgan lost our location, which is why I had to stop the car" he answers "otherwise he couldn't give us directions and we'd be going nowhere."

Oh. Now I understand. I feel a little sheepish but not so much that I'm about to apologise, even if I feel bad. Langdon doesn't deserve me taking all my anger out on him.

"How far out are we?" I ask nervously.

Langdon glances at me. "We're about two hours away, depending on traffic conditions and if we speed or not. I'm currently speeding so who knows."

"Two hours" I say dismayed "they'll have moved by then for sure."

Langdon shakes his head. "We just have to hope they don't. Winter is a smart girl, smarter than you give her credit for. You need to realise she's also stronger than you believe her to be as well. Don't think it's all hopeless, because it's not. There is always hope."

His eyes glaze over and I realise he's mind-linking someone. Probably that asshole Alpha Kai. I wonder how Johnathon's doing, being in the same car as that fucker. He's probably pissed off but someone had to go in the car with him and it sure as hell wasn't going to be me. Johnathon could deal with the big angry asshole Alpha.

"Kai is going ahead. He's several minutes ahead of us. He'll meet us there, he's not going to wait on us."

Of course he wouldn't. He's a big bad alpha. He's not going to wait for backup, even if it makes sense to. He has to show off his prowess and how strong he is to his pack and to us. He's going to be a show off, I just know it. HE better not do anything reckless and get Winter hurt, or else I'm going to kill him.

"Fine" I tell Langdon dismissively "but I don't want to be too far behind him. I don't trust him not to make another mistake" I add bitterly.

His jaw clenches and I know he's upset with the way I talk about his Alpha, but I'm beyond caring as he puts his foot to the gas pedal and goes even faster. After this is all over and done with, Langdon and I are going to have to discuss our relationship and where we want to go from here. Once Winter is safe that is. I don't even know what I want yet. All I know is that when Langdon touches me, I get goosebumps all over. I want to be by his side all the time. I like waking up next to him in the bed, even though all we do is just cuddle each other. But is that enough for me to stay with my mate forever? I don't even know what Langdon's thinking. Where he sees this relationship going. Right now's not the time to question him either.

We're so close, I think to myself a little desperately. Winter, we're so close and we're coming. I don't care what it takes, what you have to do, you need to stay in that place until we can get there. You need to fight, if you have to, because all of us are coming for you, and when we get there, Thomas is a dead hybrid who will never hurt you again. Please be safe, sweet sister of mine, please be alive, I think frantically and glance down at my clock. I hr and 45 minutes to go until we got there. I was going to be counting down the minutes until we reached her location. Please stay there, I think desperately, we're coming.

## Chapter 88 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

### Winter POV

This time when I open my eyes, there's a piercing pain in my neck, the pain is still there and it's excruciating. Not only that but I still feel dazed, out of it and extremely disorientated. I don't know how much blood Thomas decided to help himself to, but it feels like it was a lot. Otherwise why would I be so damn weak? I trace the mark which is now non existant on my neck sadly. I loved that mark. Now I was going to have to get Kai to mark me again, and there was no guarantees he would want to. Damn you to hell Thomas.

A coughing noise, draws my attention and I glance up towards the altar, where it appears to be coming from. My eyes widen in disbelief. Tied to the altar is a man, but not just any man, a man dressed in a priest's uniform. I take a long sniff and crinkle my nose. I can't sense him being a shifter and I'm relatively sure that he's not a vampire. Why was he there? How could Thomas have tied up a human for heaven's sake. I had thought this church was abandoned but apparently it wasn't. Where were the rest of the people? Thomas couldn't have killed them all, could he?

He's gagged, so he can't speak. I sigh and then move my hands, my eyes looking down in shock as I realise while they are still restrained they aren't shackled to my legs anymore, giving me some freedom to move around. The silver burns, but it's a slight annoyance in the grand scheme of things. That's not the worst part though. I shudder. I can't believe how violated I feel. He touched me while I was sleeping, saw my naked form. I'm no longer wearing the clothes I had originally put on. Instead, I see with dread, I'm wearing a white gown, that definitely resembles a wedding dress. I feel bile rise up in my throat. Had he taken liberties with me while I was sleeping? Surely not. I feel sick to my stomach. Bad enough he dressed me while I slept. I wish I had the bracelet that Kai gave me. Thomas took it and I don't know what he did with it.

Where is he? Then I see the pair of glowing red eyes behind the priest and swallow. He looks mad, half crazy. His hair is dishevelled. I wonder if it's due to the result of being a hybrid and one that hadn't been born but created. He steps forward and I instantly cringe, curling up into a ball. I'm afraid, my teeth are chattering. He seems to be unhinged and that's what frightens me the most. As for Sabriel, I cannot hear her and I'm wondering if he gave me more wolfsbane while I was unconscious. I would have given anything to have heard my wolf in that moment, even if it was just for some reassurance. She would have kept my spirits up in a heartbeat.

"How do you like your dress?" Thomas asks smoothly, stepping forward.

I glance at him in contempt. He too has gotten dressed up and is now wearing a tux of all things. It doesn't take a genius to put two and two together. He's trying to get us married, it explains the poor priest who's tied up at the altar. This is definitely not how I envisioned getting married in my dreams.

"I can't say I like it" I spit out at him and his eyes narrow. Before I can stop him, he takes a step forward and swings his hand forward, slapping me directly across the face. It's the first time he's hurt me since he's taken me and I put a hand up to my stinging cheek, staring at him as he looks apologetic all of a sudden.

"I'm sorry Winter" he croons at me, looking worried "it's just that I went to so much trouble to get that dress for you and then you insulted it."

"I'm sorry" I say automatically. Man, he was stronger than he realised, the pain was much more than just a simple slap.

He looks pleased at my apology.

"Good, good" he mutters, helping me to stand and supporting me as I sway back and forth on my feet, feeling dizzy and lightheaded.

"This is no good, you can barely stand" he says slightly annoyed. Then he places me leaning against the altar and darts forward. He begins to untie the poor fellow tied to the altar and I know it's not because he's about to let the man go free.



"Stay back from me demon" the priest says shakily as he's untied. I see Thomas roll his eyes at the man, and his fangs slowly protrude from his mouth. The man flinches. I see on his shoulder two marks and realise that Thomas has taken his blood as well. The poor priest must feel as dizzy as I am.

"I'm not a demon" Thomas roars at him "but so help me I can turn into one, if you don't do as I say. Don't make me kill the rest of them" he snaps and I realise he must have stashed the other people somewhere so that the man would be forced to do his bidding.

"What do you want from me" the priest asks shakily, swaying back and forth on his feet. He's completely pale, ashen and there's sweat beading on his forehead. He looks unwell. I wonder if I'm faring better, simply because I'm a shifter and not completely human like this poor guy. My shifter blood probably replenishes the lost blood far more quickly than if I was human.

"Isn't it obvious" Thomas growls with a grim expression on his face, gesturing towards me as I stay leaning against the altar, feeling weak as a newborn kitten "I want you to marry the both of us."

All the blood drains out of my face. I don't want to marry him, but I can't exactly force my body to move, to run. If I managed to, he'd snatch me up in a heartbeat, being much quicker than I am at running. Stupid hybrid powers, I think miserably. I wish Sabriel was here.

God, where was Kai when I needed him. If I was to marry anyone, I wanted it to be him. I even pray that he, Damien, Johnathon, Langdon are all searching for me. If only I could have left some clues for them to follow! But I'd been unconscious for the majority of it all. Maybe they had a backup plan I think to myself, I was violently hoping if they were to find me, it would be soon.

"I cannot marry someone who is unwilling" the priest says quietly, though he's trembling all over "and the young lady does not look like she wants to get married."

I want to smile at the man, but I know that Thomas is furious. "Marry us" I say, before he can threaten the innocent people he's got tied up somewhere "it's for the greater good, Priest, if it means saving innocent people" I say pointedly.

Thomas gives the man a wicked grin and comes back to my side, holding me firmly at the waist as tears come to the corner of my eyes. "After the ceremony, I'm going to mark you as mine forever" he promises and I stifle a sob. This was my worst nightmare coming true. The priest looks uncertain, but I

give him a pleading look. I don't want people killed because of me, not when I have the ability to prevent it.

"We need witnesses" the priest says uncertainly.

"The hell we do" snarls Thomas, "just do it already. You can pretend there are witnesses, now get a move on" he threatens. I say nothing. If I do, I might just be sick all over myself.

The priest takes a deep breath, a bible laying on the altar in front of him, a nervous expression on his face. He looks at me apologetically but he's not to blame for any of this. Instead I blame myself. I was so sure I'd killed Thomas back then, but I'd apparently failed. This is all my fault. It's karma getting back at me. I close my eyes as the priest begins to speak.

"Ladies and gentlemen we are gathered here today, to witness the union between this man" he motions to Thomas who speaks "Thomas" and this woman "Winter" Thomas fills in "today."

I can't bear to listen to the words as he speaks them. I tune out. I feel numb, dead inside. I know what Thomas is going to do after this ceremony and I'm tense, preparing myself. I would rather die than let him mark me. I won't let him violate my body like that, let alone have a wedding night of nightmares. If I have to kill myself first then I will, but I'd rather fight until the end. The priest, I'm fairly certain is going on and on, prolonging the ceremony for as long as possible. I thank him with my eyes when I open them, but it's all for naught. Unless Kai comes bursting in, but the more time goes by, the more deflated I feel.

"Not much longer" Thomas whispers, licking his lips as I stare at him in revulsion. "Just think about our wedding night Winter. I'm going to make it so special for the both of us" he whispers. Tears trail down my cheeks and the priest pauses, seeing it. I move my head, imploring him to continue as Thomas's eyes turn even more red in his anger. The priest looks at me helplessly as he continues the ceremony.

"If anyone should object to this holy matrimony" booms the priest "let them speak now or forever hold their peace."

There's silence. Then the doors to the church burst open, and a dishevelled Kai comes racing in, with Damien, Johnathon and Langdon. His jaw is clenched and he looks absolutely furious, especially when he takes in the scene. A growl fills the air. The priest looks like he's about to faint.

"I object" Kai growls as Thomas grips me tightly, holding me in front of him, hissing.

"She's mine" Thomas hisses "you no longer have a claim on her Alpha Kai" he adds triumphantly, indicating my bare neck.

For a moment there's silence as Kai looks at my neck and sees his mark is now gone. Then all hell breaks loose. "You son of a bitch" Kai roars and there's low growling coming from the rest of them as they shift to their wolf forms. Thomas moves my head to the side, even as I try to fight it, his fangs pointing out. "Come any closer and I'll drain her blood before you get to me" he threatens.

Kai is pissed and stuck. He makes one move and Thomas takes the blood from my body. He's too frightened to put me in danger. The priest makes a bolt for it and Thomas lets him go, more focused on keeping me from moving. He lightly places his fangs against my neck as I shudder. Kai's eyes widen.

"Don't do it" he cries and Thomas grins.

"Back away" he orders and Kai slowly backs up, the wolves doing the same, although they look angry, snapping their jaws up and down at him. Thomas ignores all of them.

"How dare you ruin my wedding day" he says and Kai looks nonplussed.

He's crazy, I mouth to Kai and he gives a small nod.

"Winter is mine, mark or no mark" Kai says firmly "she is my mate and I love her. You are a crazy piece of shit hybrid that needs to be put down" he spits out, making Thomas angry. Great. Both of them are fighting with words. Screw this, I think to myself and tense my body up. I have one shot at this and if I fuck up, then I'm a goner. But would that be such a bad thing if Thomas is going to kill me anyway? At least this way I would have attempted something instead of standing there and letting it happen.

I look at Kai, trying to convey I was about to do something. I hope he gets the message. His eyes darken at the look on my face. Without further ado, I smack my head back into Thomas and drop to the floor as he gives out a howl. The next thing I see is a large black wolf, leaping over my body, aiming directly towards a stunned Thomas.

Chapter 89 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Kai POV

We're almost there. We're so close I can taste it. I pull up in front of what seems to be an old abandoned church, in the middle of a small town. Winter better be here I think grimly, it's the last co-ordinates that we received before they went missing. I almost leap out of the car, Johnathon doing the same.

"We should just go in" Johnathon mutters, and although I'm tempted, I want to wait for Langdon and Damien. They're not far behind and I'd rather have them as backup. The warriors are a little bit behind them.

I sidle closer to the doors and sniff. My eyes widen, Winter is in there, I can smell her. My heart begins to thud loudly in my chest. Another car pulls up. It's Damien and Langdon, thank god, because I'm having a hell of a time preventing myself from storming inside. I motion for them to follow me. I kick the doors open to the church. The son of a bitch is in there, I'm sure of it and I'm going to kill him.

I pull up at the sight of Winter in a wedding dress, Thomas behind her, wearing a tuxedo of all things. It dawns on me that he's trying to marry her against her will. My fury ignites.

"I object" I growl, the sound filling the otherwise silent church.

There's a priest behind them and he looks petrified. I sniff. He's human. Great the last thing we need to deal with. Thomas just grins at me, cocky little bastard.

He presses his fangs to Winter's neck, they are gleaming in the darkness of the church, threatening to take her blood. I'm helpless, even as the other's shift, ready to take Thomas out in a moments notice.

There's no mark on Winter's neck anymore. Somehow the asshole has managed to remove it. I'm so angry, I can barely see straight, but I'm holding it together for Winter's sake. She's so pale and I can see a bite mark already on her neck where the bastard has already dug his fangs into her. Winter is giving me a look, her eyes trying to convey something and my eyes turn black. She's going to do something, I can tell and my body tenses in preparation. Whatever she's about to do, I can't afford not to take advantage of it.

I watch in disbelief as she throws her head back into Thomas's and throws herself down. I don't hesitate. She's given me the opening I so badly needed and I shift, throwing myself over her body and sending Thomas flying against the altar. I expect him to give up, after all he's clearly outnumbered but instead he laughs, getting back up and sending smiles our way. Is he that crazy?

"That was nothing" he sneers and throws himself at me. He's still in his human form, but he's incredibly strong, grabbing hold of me and throwing me across the room, sending pews flying everywhere.

Damien's wolf snarls and leaps, Thomas grabbing him by the tail and sending him flying into Johnathon and Langdon's wolves, sending them crashing to the ground. This fight isn't going to be easier. I spare a glance at Winter. She's still on the ground and I hope she stays down. It's safer at the moment. I notice the priest has made a dash for it. Thomas begins to shift and I watch in astonishment. His wolf is large, larger than my own. Is this because he's a hybrid? More powerful than even an Alpha wolf? Fuck.

I tackle him, his jaws clamping on me as he shakes me back and forth like a rag doll and sends me crashing into the nearby wall. Damien growls, charging him and I watch as Thomas easily dodges and then turns, swiping Damien across the midsection. He gives a howl and backs away. Langdon takes the opportunity to charge and gets thrown into the wall, his back hitting it solidly and his body making a huge thumping noise as he crashes to the floor.

Johnathon leaps, landing on Thomas's back, biting furiously, his jaws clamping down on Thomas. Thomas reaches back and bucks him off, sending him to the floor. At this rate, we're never going to win the fight. I never anticipated that he was this strong. He's holding his own against two alpha's for heaven's sake. That in itself is remarkable. Then I hear more snarls coming from the back of me and I know that the warriors have come and shifted. Game on, I think to myself, watching Thomas, you've nowhere to go you bastard. You're dead meat.

For the first time since this fight's began I see fear in Thomas's eyes. He clearly hadn't expected me to bring so many reinforcements. Or he had been banking on us not being able to track him. He was that arrogant. I snarl. Winter, slowly gets to her feet and moves sideways. I wonder what on earth she's thinking, but thankfully Thomas doesn't appear to notice, all his focus is on me and everyone else. Which means for now, Winter is safe, so long as she doesn't bring any attention to herself.

I leap and he swerves. He jumps and takes out two of my men who were attempting to sneak up behind him. They go skidding into some of the other wolves, upending them off their feet. I jump at the same time as Johnathon, both of us landing on him, our jaws clamping down. He howls, jumping and bucking,

as I claw at his sides. He manages to twist enough to get both of us off. But there's something strange. I can clearly see the blood trickling down from his various injuries, but they're healing incredibly fast, right in front of my eyes. No wolf can heal that quick. This is because of his hybrid blood. Shit. We're going to have to work together and break his neck or something so that he can't heal. Something that is difficult even at the best of times.

Damien and Langdon attack, Damien clamping his jaws on to Thomas's leg and bending it until it makes a sickening crack. He's managed to break it and they both dance away. But within moments the damage is undone. Everyone is panting heavily, but Thomas hasn't broken a sweat at all. He even looks like a rogue with his red glowing eyes, even though he doesn't smell like one.

I can see Winter moving around, behind the altar, digging around as though she's looking for something. I try not to look too hard, I don't want Thomas to swing his head around and stare at her. She could be coming up with some sort of plan. Whatever it is, I hope she keeps herself safe at the same time.

Thomas leaps and meets me in mid air- we both kick and claw at the same time, falling to the ground and rolling over and over as everyone else tries to chime in and help. I feel his jaws clamp down on my leg and kick, bucking and writhing until he lets go and backs away. Damien and Langdon are up, but as my eyes swing to them, I can see that both are covered in various injuries and won't be able to continue much longer. My warriors have fared slightly better and they go dashing for Thomas but he sends them flying. I barely dodge in time as a wolf almost careens into me.

Winter is standing now. I eye her. She's brandishing something in her right hand and it's shimmering in the darkness. I have to hone in and when I do, my eyes widen. She's found a knife, a silver one at the altar. It could be our only shot, but it would have to be plunged into his heart and even then, he still had his vampire side to contend with. Throw it, I think to myself, throw it Winter. She raises her arm and throws the dagger, right at me as I shift back to human form and catch it. Thomas looks at me but seems to be nonplussed, changing back into his own human form.

"You really think that's going to change anything" he growls and moves, fast but not as fast as me. I hold the dagger up and stab him directly into his chest as his eyes open in disbelief.

He lets out a short cry, a gurgled sound and I let him drop to the ground. I push the dagger even harder, making sure it enters his heart. I'm not taking any chances. The other shifters surround me. I drop him to the floor as his eyes blink up at me. Winter sidles closer.

"Fuck you" he breathes and I push the dagger in even more as his eyes widen. Then just as suddenly he stares up at the ceiling, his eyes blank. Winter comes to my side and I place my arm over her shoulder but she shrugs it off. "We have to make sure he's dead" she says sounding slightly hysterical. Before I can stop her, she bends over Thomas's body and grasps hold of the dagger. Before she can pull it out though, his eyes shoot open and his arm raises. He hits her, sending her flying, her head and back hitting the walls of the church as her body slides down to the floor.

"Son of a bitch" I growl and reach down, gripping hold of his neck and his body as he weakly tries to stop me. I twist his head until his neck breaks and then continue, until his head is severed from his body. I drop it to the floor as everyone else shifts back to their human form.

"Clean this up" I say tiredly "and contact the chief of police, he happens to be a shifter. He's going to need to know what went down tonight."

Langdon nods, helping Damien to sit. Johnathon is already clutching at his ribs and breathing heavily, sitting himself down on some pews.

I race over to Winter. She's breathing thank goodness but there's blood matted in her hair at the back of her head, and some along the wall. She hit the wall hard. I'm worried not only about her being concussed but that the damage might even be worse than that. I need to get her home. I glance over at my shoulder. Johnathon is definitely in no state to be in the passenger seat, he needs to be lying down with those cracked ribs. Good thing the warriors had several cars.

"Langdon" I say, bending down and picking Winter up. Geez, she's light as a feather.

He comes over to me, glancing over his shoulder at Damien. "Yes Alpha Kai."

"I want you to organise transportation and any medical assistance anyone needs. I'm taking Winter back in my car" I explain gruffly "but Johnathon needs to be lying down, he won't be comfortable sitting up in my passenger seat."

Langdon nods his understanding. "Leave it to me, I'll organise everything" he says confidently.

I have no doubts he'll clean this mess up. I gingerly take Winter out to the car, her body flopping limply in my arms like a rag doll. I'm careful to place her in the back of the car, uncaring about the blood that stains the seats. She's far more important. I buckle her in securely and find a blanket to place over her. She's been through something traumatic and any small thing I can do for her, I'll do without hesitation.

I start the car, easing it out onto the road. I'm still naked but I could care less. I can steal some scrubs or something from the hospital when we get there. The drive is long, painfully slow as traffic forces me to standstill several times. Even this late at night, the roads are busy. When we finally make it back to the pack house, I'm almost ready to shout in relief, pulling up right in front of the hospital and getting Winter carefully out of the car. I walk inside, clutching her tightly to me. Please, god, let her be alright.

Chapter 90 - The Alpha's Rejected Silent Mate

Winter POV

There's so much beeping. It's really frustrating the hell out of me. Why is it so loud? It's piercing my ear drums. I want to shut it off. It's making me so mad, so angry. My eyelids flutter open. I look around me, perplexed. Why am I hooked up to all these machines? There's something in my arm and I pull it out, ignoring the blood that trickles from the wound. It stings a little but I'm more fascinated by the room. Or disgusted. Disgusted would be more accurate.

It's so sterile, so white. I glance down and see that I'm in a gown. I touch it, it's rough. Not soft at all. The blanket is coarse and thick. It's warm at least, I think to myself with a shrug. I'm barefoot and the window blinds are up, showing a large house in the distance and nice grounds. I wonder if I live there?

Where am I? I'm so confused. I can't remember how I got here, no matter how much I try. Did someone bring me here? I know I'm in a hospital of some kind but not where. Everything seems to be jumbled in my mind. The room is empty. Should I ring for a nurse? My head is pounding and it feels like it's going to split open. I grimace. Bathroom business first. I push the machines to the side and climb out of bed. A quick check of the room and I find the bathroom attached, going inside and doing my business.

I stare at the face in the mirror. A stranger stares back. I touch my hair and so does the reflection. I purse my lips and so does the mirror. But I don't recognise the face. I can't tell if that's really me. It's like I've never seen this girl before in my life. Who is she? I slowly walk back out of the bathroom. I'm at a complete loss as to what to do. Should I go and find someone maybe?



A doctor and a man come into the room. I stare at the man, he's handsome in a rugged masculine way. He has scars across his face, that make him look a little ferocious but I'm not frightened of him. Instead, a small part of me wants to touch them. I frown. Am I familiar with this man? Because he looks much older than the girl in the mirror. I sit on the bed and stare, wanting to know who they are.

The doctor smiles at me. He looks nice. The other man is beaming and folding his arms. I stare at him. Why is he so happy?

"How are you feeling?" the doctor asks me.

I think for a moment. "My head is pounding and I have a bad headache" I tell him reluctantly.

He scribbles in his chart. What is it about doctors and charts?

"That's to be expected" murmurs the doctor "you hit your head pretty hard. Now from what I can tell there was no concussion but I want you to be on the lookout for any other side effects."

"Like what?" I ask frowning.

"Nausea, vomiting, blurred vision" he lists. I nod and grimace. Big mistake, the pain in my head flares up.

The other man speaks, "I'll keep a close eye on her doctor, don't you worry."

Why would he be keeping a close eye on me? Then it hits me, he must be a family member. It explains the age gap. Maybe he's my brother.

"Winter, are you feeling alright? You're being very quiet" the doctor says concerned.

I blink at him confused. Is he talking to me?

"Who?" I ask "Who's Winter?"

There's nothing but silence in the room. The man with the scars is chewing his lip and staring at the doctor, who looks incredibly nervous and slightly upset.

"Your name is Winter" the doctor says worriedly "do you not know your name?"

I shake my head. I'm trying not to feel too panicky, but that's easier said than done. The doctor glances at the other man, who's gone pale.

"What about this man?" asks the doctor, pointing to the other one.

I shake my head again. "Is he a family member?" I ask, turning to the man with scars "are you my brother?"

His mouth drops open in disbelief. "No I'm not your brother" he growls and I stiffen.

What's his problem? It was a genuine mistake. He doesn't have to get so angry over it.

"What's wrong with her?" The man glowers at the doctor who gulps and looks at me with concern in his eyes.

"I'm going to have to do some tests" the doctor mutters to him "but I suspect that due to the injury she sustained on her head, she's suffering from amnesia."

"What" explodes the man with scars as I nervously jump "how on earth does that happen? How do we fix it" he snarls.

"You can't just fix it, her memories have to come back on their own" doc explains.

The man does not look happy.

"Who are you?" I ask and he looks at me, his eyes softening for a moment.

"I'm your mate" he says quietly, taking hold of my hand.

I shiver as tingles run up my hand and arm. It feels nice. The word mate is echoing in my mind, like I should instinctively know what it is.

"Can she still feel the mate bond?" the man asks rather desperately.

"She can, but she won't know what it is" the doctor says reluctantly 'all she'll know is that she's drawn to you for some reason."

Hello, I'm sitting right here, I think to myself sarcastically. Not that they seem to notice, having a discussion like I'm not sitting here listening.

"I like you" I tell the man with scars as he squeezes my hand "you seem nice" I say, yawning and feeling incredibly tired.

The man looks taken aback. "I like you too" he mutters. He seems a bit out of his depth. I guess we like each other but it surprises me considering the age gap. But then does age really matter when you're in love? I want to believe it doesn't.

"I'll come back in a little while" the doctor says "and get those tests started."

The man looks displeased "you said I could take her home today."

"You still can, just want to confirm everything first" the doctor says, scurrying out of the room as fast as his little legs can carry him. I guess he's afraid of the man with scars. I don't blame him, the man is definitely intimidating, but oh so handsome. I feel like I'm drooling as I stare at him.

"What's your name?" I ask shyly.

"It's Kai" he says gruffly.

Kai. The name sounds familiar. Like I've heard it before. I like it. I like the person attached to the name, I'm certain of it. He squeezes my hand.

"Winter, we live together" Kai says, his eyes staring directly into mine as I suck in a breath "we share the same bedroom. We both love each other. Do you remember any of that?" he asks rather forlorn.

I strain but can't remember. I feel miserable as I shake my head again. "I'm sorry" I whisper "I don't remember" I add.

"It's not your fault" he tells me "don't blame yourself. We'll get through this" he adds firmly.

I admire his optimism. There's another sound and voice at the doorway.

"Your'e awake little sis."

I look at the doorway. There's another man in the doorway, clutching a teddy bear and smiling. He looks slightly older than me. I frown. Did he just call me his little sister. He pulls me into a hug and I awkwardly pat him on the back, before he hands me the teddy bear. He sits on the other chair next to Kai and smiles.

"So how are you feeling?" he asks breezily.

Kai glares at him. "She has amnesia so she doesn't know who any of us are" he barks.

The man's face falls. "Really" he says in a whisper, pointing at himself "you don't know who I am?"

I feel bad. "No, I don't know you I'm sorry."

"I'm Damien, your older brother."

Damien. The word rolls off my tongue. It sparks something inside of me but I can't say what. I hug the teddy bear to my chest and breathe. I'm starting to feel overwhelmed.

"It's alright, we can get to know each other again later" Damien says hastily.

I give him a tentative smile.

The doctor reappears and I shrink back. Kai holds onto me, running his fingers down my arm. It's soothing and relaxes me. It helps me to calm down. "I just checked the x-ray and there was some damage to her skull. It's very minor and will heal itself, seeing as she's a shifter, but it means the amnesia is real. I can't say how long it will be until Winter gets her memories back."

Kai looks disappointed. I'm disappointed too. Now what am I meant to do? Just take everyone's word for it when they tell me who they are and how they are related to me?

"When can I take her home?" asks Kai and I stiffen.

"You can take her now if you want. But I need to check up on her in a few days" the doctor warns. Kai nods his head.

"Winter" Kai says softly as I look at him, fear in my eyes. "How about we get you some clothes and then I can take you back home to rest."

I'm not sure but the doctor seems to trust him, so I guess I will as well. I obediently let him help me out of the bed and the doctor hands me some clothes. They look new. I don't bother to ask, going into the bathroom and slowly getting myself changed.

When I come back Damien is gone and it's just Kai standing there.

"Where's Damien?"

"He went back already" Kai answers "we didn't want to overwhelm you."

He hands me the teddy bear and I clutch it to my chest.

Kai puts a hand on my back and begins to lead me out of the hospital. We go through the main doors and walk outside. The sun is bright, warm, my eyes water at the brightness of it. The sky is a beautiful clear blue with fluffy clouds in the sky. The grass looks soft and lush, a bright green against the pathways. It's a perfect day and I breathe in the smell of pine and dirt appreciatively. He holds my hand and I let him guide me towards the large house in the distance.

"Kai" I say quietly as we walk "I don't think I want to stay in the same bed as you, until I have my memories back." I flinch. Is he going to get mad and hurt me?

He looks hurt instead. "I can understand that" he admits and I let out a giant whoosh of relief "but I'm at least going to put you in an adjoining room instead. That's as far as I'm willing to compromise."

I think about that. It seems fair enough. He is compromising considering we apparently share a bed and bedroom.

"Thankyou" I tell him shyly.

We enter the large house and he leads me upstairs. We bypass a few bedrooms and then he stops showing me one. "This is our room" he explains as I look around, seeing nothing to spark a memory. He opens another door and motions me inside. It's a pretty basic room but its nice and next to where he's apparently going to be sleeping. I sit on the bed.

"Lie down" Kai tells me and I spread out on the bed. He places the covers on me. I snuggle into the bed. It feels so damn comfortable compared to the hospital one.

He pulls back a loose strand of hair that's in my face and kisses my forehead. "Try and go to sleep" he murmurs "you need to rest and recover."

"How did I end up in the hospital?" I ask curiously.

He hesitates. "We can discuss that later."

I sigh but nod. My eyes begin to flutter closed. They feel heavy now and I feel exhausted. I hug my teddy bear to my chest and start to fall asleep. The last thing I hear before darkness surrounds me is Kai's voice "Damn that bastard for causing this."